

October 2, 1962

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY**THE WHITE HOUSE****EXCERPT OF REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT A LUNCHEON FOR A GROUP OF
FOREIGN MINISTERS OF LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES
IN THE STATE DINING ROOM**

We believe that the organization which combines a stronger commitment by all of us, the commitment made when the organization was first organized, but also a continuing commitment which has been renewed on many occasions and has been renewed again here today, to the concept of a free and democratic hemisphere, dedicated to permitting the development of an environment in this hemisphere which would provide a better life for all of our people, that, and the commitment of an equal vote for all countries regardless of their numbers and regardless of their size, seems to me to assure us all equal protection and equal benefits from this close alliance.

I think that you all share our view that this matter of communism in this hemisphere is not a matter really between merely the United States and Cuba, or between Castro and the United States. This is an armed doctrine that we are struggling against whose threat is worldwide and all of us must be concerned with limiting its effects in this hemisphere and we hope eliminating it.

There are many things that are unsatisfactory about life in this hemisphere, and the life of our people, but I don't think that any of us would feel that the solution rests with communism or with Castro-ism. I think it rests with the concepts behind the Alliance For Progress and the Pan American Plan and the other common efforts which we have developed to provide assurances for our people over a period of time.

What we have to do is prevent the expansion from Cuba itself of the Communist doctrine, using Cuba as a base and using Cuba as the spearhead to attack the security of us all. Therefore, we believe that it is in the interests of us all that we meet together to consider what actions we can most usefully take to contain the expansion of communism from the island of Cuba, and to take those steps which will finally provide for the freedom of the people of Cuba.

There are just two points I wanted to make. One is that it is suggested by some that because the United States and other countries are associated in the defense of countries such as Turkey, and others in different parts of the world, that it is, therefore, quite natural that the Soviet Union would associate itself intimately with the destiny of Cuba. I don't think the

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And the second point is what I suggested at the beginning: What is most in the interests of Castro and the Communist cause is to suggest that this is a dispute between little Cuba and a rather strong United States. That is not, of course, the issue at all. It is the issue between the free world and the Communist world, and the assistance -- I mean the mutual effort that we can secure so that it is a hemisphere matter, the people of this hemisphere, from Latin America and from North America, joining together to resist the expansion of communism, it seems to me, offers the greatest security to us all.

If Castro is able to suggest that this is merely a matter between the United States and Cuba, I think the Communists have scored a most important victory. Therefore, we ask your help at this meeting in joining together in a common effort to limit at the beginning the further expansion of communism in the Caribbean and in our hemisphere, and also to consider jointly what steps we can take which will insure that there will be no furtherance of the communism movement in either Cuba or anyplace else in our hemisphere.

Communism can be the death of this hemisphere. I think the time for us to join together, regardless of all of the difficulties we have at home -- and I am conscious of all of them in every one of your countries -- I think there is no time to temporize with the Communist movement. The time for us to move and join together and take a position against it is today. If we do not move in concert, it will become a struggle between the United States and Cuba, and that would be the most important victory that the Communists could win in this hemisphere, regardless of what might happen to Castro himself.

In short, gentlemen, we ask your help in this effort which, as I say, is worldwide, which has a very important facet here in this hemisphere. We ask your assistance in this struggle intaking those steps which can insure the maintenance of freedom in this hemisphere, a freedom which I believe can end at this time, and with our united efforts can permit us to solve the problems which disturb our hemisphere, and provide a better life for our people, but we need that time and we need that freedom.

Therefore, we in the United States are asking you to join us to insure the security of our hemisphere, just as we have joined in other parts of the world to help insure the security of those areas against Communist attack in advance.

Gentlemen, I would like to drink to the welfare of the people of the countries which you represent, to their freedom, and to the good health of their Presidents.

~~SECRET - OF RECORDS OF THE PRESIDENT~~
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